

BRIEFING

21st century communications from the City of Bloomington

Volume 9, Number 1

February 2001

Get a loan for repairs - page 8

In this issue...

Special Election
A special general election to fill the Council-at-Large seat through the end of 2001 will be held March 20. Polls will be open 7 a.m. - 8 p.m. For more information or to apply for an absentee ballot, call the City Clerk's office at 952-563-8729 or visit the City's Web site at www.ci.bloomington.mn.us.

Word from the Mayor
How does the City serve your needs? One way is the Bloomington Police Department's partnership with the community. *Page 2.*

Sound investments
Good financial planning helps keep our City strong. The 2001 Budget is presented. *Page 3.*

What's up at Creekside
Explore the possibilities with Get Acquainted with Creekside, the Senior Program held at Creekside Community Center, 9801 Penn Avenue South. Meetings are the first Wednesday of each month from 10 to 11 a.m. For more information, call 952-563-4957 V/TTY.

Programs you'll flip for

Cheer about the new cheerleading and gymnastics programs sponsored by Parks and Recreation.

Plus, other youth and adult activities will get you in shape for spring. *Pages 4 and 5.*

Upgrading your computer?

Don't throw it away - recycle it! Computers contain toxins harmful to our health and environment if not disposed of properly. *Page 6.*

Children's health

Obesity in children has tripled in the last 40 years. Understand some of the barriers to good nutrition and physical activity in youth. *Page 7.*

Visit us on-line

Log on to the City's Web site to get all the latest additions. *Page 8.*

Expand your horizons

Find out about the Bloomington Senior Program by subscribing to the **Creekside Chronicle**, a monthly newsletter mailed to hundreds of senior households. Get the scoop on activities, fitness programs, trips, computer classes, support groups, hobbies and events designed with seniors in mind. Included is information regarding legal and health issues and federal and state services for senior citizens. Subscriptions are \$8 per year. Call 952-563-4957 V/TTY to subscribe.

In due time

A Public Works maintenance crew has been working on the 54-foot Clock Tower located at 98th and Lyndale. Because of weather conditions and lack of maintenance from the original vendor, the clock had stopped. In January, an authorized technician made repairs that included upgrading the motor and installing a heater for the transmission. If all goes well, the clock will continue to run properly in all weather conditions. The Bloomington History Tower Association and citizens of our community donated the Clock Tower to the City in 1998.



Measure of the City

City gets high marks on report card from residents

Bloomington citizens are satisfied with the quality of City services, according to a new poll conducted by research firm L e e d e Research of Minneapolis.

Positive aspects

What do you like best about living in Bloomington?

Close to things/jobs	46%
Friendly/safe community	10%
Area/city (in general)	9%
Peaceful/clean neighborhoods	7%
Schools	6%
Grew up/family here	4%
Parks	3%
Other/don't know	15%

City conducted a resident survey was in 1990.

According to this recent "report card," 94 percent of residents rated their experience with the City of Bloomington as "very satisfactory" or "satisfactory." Services generating the strongest levels of satisfaction were parks and recreational opportunities, police and fire protection.

Quality of life ranks high

Location and proximity to jobs and other amenities were viewed as the most positive aspects of living in Bloomington, according to respondents.

There was also the perception that the area is a friendly and pleasant place. Community safety and neighborhood appearance ranked high as well. *See chart to left.*

Good value for City tax dollar

The survey found that respondents feel there is solid value in the property tax money they pay for the City services they receive annually. For example, 70 percent of residents replied that the quality and value of City services is "very good" or "good" for the property taxes paid. When asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the City, 94 percent responded "very satisfactory" or "satisfactory." *See chart to right.*

City is responsive

The survey also indicated that most residents feel they are being well-served by the City, particularly when compared with other area communities. Seventy-three percent of those polled agree or somewhat agree that Bloomington

Perceived value of property taxes

Would you say the value you receive as a homeowner for your property tax money is ...?

Very good	37%
Good	33%
Average	20%
Very poor	2%
Don't know	8%

officials are responsive to their concerns and needs. This compares to 71 percent for Minneapolis, 66 percent for St. Paul and 64 percent for other communities in the metro area according to a recent survey published by Metropolitan State University.

Continued page 2.

City of Bloomington
2215 West Old Shakopee Road
Bloomington MN 55431-3096

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Dedicated to Service

Striving to meet the needs of our community

Mayor Gene Winstead

Many City services we receive go unnoticed: getting quality water by simply turning on the faucet. Driving on cleared streets after a measurable snowfall. Having a police and fire department ready to serve any time of the day or night.

City services strengthen our community

The services provided by our City organization contribute to the quality of our lives and add value to our community. Effective law enforcement such as traffic control, affordable water and sewer rates, business and development efforts that give us a strong tax base, street maintenance programs and quality youth and senior programs are a few of these tangible assets.

Over the course of this year, we will look in-depth at the City services we receive every day and how they strengthen our community.

The Police Department connects with people

Operating round the clock, 365 days a year, it's not hard to imagine the service the Bloomington Police Department gives us. From the officers on the street to support personnel, the Police Department is committed to providing professional police services in partnership with our community.

Working together

Such efforts include crime prevention measures designed to bring the community and Police together.



CITIZENS POLICE ACADEMY

Since its inception in 1999, one hundred people have attended **The Citizens Police Academy**. One night a week for 10 weeks, participants experience the priorities and challenges of our Police Department through lectures and hands-on demonstrations. Citizens try on gear, handle firearms, use a shooting simulator that presents shoot/don't shoot situations and tour 911 facilities.

In addition, the Emergency Response Unit demonstrates the use of their equipment in high-risk or hostage situations. The program creates an understanding and appreciation for the services the Police provide our community.



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM

The **Neighborhood Watch** program enables Police and residents to work together to reduce crime. More than 1,000 block captains and 305 neighborhoods participate. The Police Department conducts an annual workshop to train and educate block captains so they can incorporate learned techniques in their neighborhoods. The workshop makes Police available to the public and is an opportunity for residents to voice concerns and create solutions to common problems.

Citizen involvement

One issue that came out of Neighborhood Watch meetings was concern from residents regarding traffic safety. In response, the Proactive Police Services Unit has initiated a program to improve traffic safety in targeted areas. Enforcement efforts have been increased through traffic calming duties including the placement of traffic safety



TRAFFIC CALMING WITH SPEED TRAILER

signs and the use of a "speed trailer". The program also stresses the need for drivers to take personal responsibility for their driving habits.

Crime-free multi-housing is a partnership between the Police Department, rental property owners/managers and tenants in an effort to provide a safer living environment and reduce crime and fear of crime in rental properties. The program, with 73 percent of rental properties in Bloomington participating, offers security advice such as the use of deadbolt locks, landscaping for visibility of crime, adequate security lighting and screening of tenants.

"THE BADGE we so proudly display serves as

a symbol of the public's faith in our ability to provide professional, efficient and reliable services. Our goal in law enforcement is to meet these service needs beyond the community's expectations."



Sergeant Shaun LaDue, Proactive Police Services Supervisor

industry and neighborhoods are partnering to develop vision, mission and core value statements to ensure that everyone has a part in defining the service the Police will be expected to provide in the coming years.

Strategic Planning Group - a cross-section of Police employees is looking at ways to operate more efficiently by focusing on internal organization.

Community policing

Providing service is a way to maintain and enhance the quality of life we have in Bloomington. The Police Department relies on community input to help them identify important issues that concern all residents. The key to community policing is for everyone to take responsibility for themselves and to assist others. This partnership and the training, education, and experience the Police bring to the job will help them to provide quality services now and

Report card from residents

Continued from page 1.

Satisfaction was strongest with the City's response to neighborhood problems and crime, residential development, garbage and recycling services and street design.

Traffic is a concern

When asked if they could change one thing about Bloomington, the only issue that generated a double-digit response was traffic. Both traffic law violations and traffic congestion ranked high when residents were asked which issues affected their neighborhoods. *See chart.*

Video monitoring favored

While video monitoring of intersections has been a controversial issue on the national level, the survey indicates citizens support it as a traffic management tool. Seventy-three percent of the

residents favored use of video monitoring to improve traffic safety, while 26 percent were opposed and 2 percent answered "don't know/other."

Why live here?

The driving force in selecting Bloomington as a place of residence seems to be closely tied to what respondents indicate are the greatest strengths of the community such as schools. Personal history also appears to be a factor, 11 per-

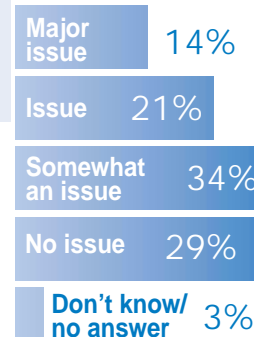
Status of Neighborhoods

Please rate these issues as they relate to your neighborhood...

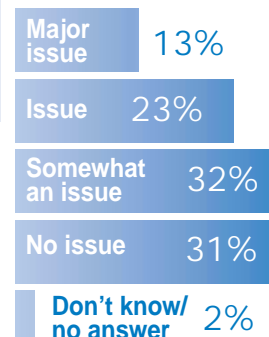
cent of respondents said they grew up or have family here.

For more information about the resident survey, contact Communications Administrator Diann Kirby at 952-563-8818. ♦

Traffic law violations



Traffic congestion



Note: Due to number rounding, totals exceed 100 percent.

City Council

Mayor	Gene Winstead	952-888-1258(h)
	mayor@ci.bloomington.mn.us	
Councilmembers	council@ci.bloomington.mn.us	
At Large	David Abrams	952-885-0506(h)
At Large	Mike Fossum	952-885-9056(h) 612-673-3645(w)
District II	Heather Harden	952-835-5919(h)
District III	Alisa Ornat	952-944-1156(h)
District I	Steve Peterson	952-884-3262(h)
District IV	Vern Wilcox	952-854-1425(h)
City Manager	Mark Bernhardson	952-563-8780
	citymanager@ci.bloomington.mn.us	

We are accessible!

Stop by or write:

City of Bloomington
2215 W. Old Shakopee Road
Bloomington MN 55431-3096

Phone:

952-563-8700

TTY:

952-563-8740

FAX:

952-563-8715

E-mail:

dkirby@ci.bloomington.mn.us

Web site:

www.ci.bloomington.mn.us

More options:

For Braille, larger print or computer disk, contact Diann Kirby, 952-563-8818.

The City of Bloomington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status or status with regard to public assistance in employment or the provision of services. The City of Bloomington does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs or activities. Upon request, accommodation will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all City of Bloomington services, programs and activities. The City has designated coordinators to facilitate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as required by Section 35.107 of the U.S. Department of Justice Regulations, and to coordinate compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as mandated by Section 8.53 of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Regulations. For information, contact the Human Services Division, City of Bloomington, 2215 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington MN 55431-3096; phone: 952-

New City facilities

The City is designing a new municipal center containing police facilities, a City Hall, a fine arts center and an addition for Public Works. In 1999, the City Council asked a task force of 14 residents and business professionals to evaluate how City facilities should be enhanced to improve customer service and provide the best long-term value to the community.

Guiding principles

The task force studied and agreed upon principles to guide the public investment in facilities. These principles included:

- ◆ Meeting resident and business service needs.
- ◆ Being fiscally responsible.
- ◆ Taking a long-term perspective.
- ◆ Proposing facilities that would help our City employees perform and enjoy their jobs - giving us an improved return on our most important investment, our staff.

Campus site

The task force determined that current facilities where not adequate and new facilities were needed for Police, City Hall and indoor storage of Public Works vehicles and equipment. For example, the City Hall building was designed for a staff of 200 but now houses more than 300 employees.

The task force recommended a campus of City facilities centered at 98th Street and James Avenue. Their report emphasized that the City's decisions on facilities affect not only the quality of service to residents but, over time, the City's image and potential.

Long-term investment

While the costs were greater to acquire and redevelop the site at 98th Street and Old Shakopee Road, a majority of the City Council directed staff to purchase the site, agreeing that this would be the best long-term investment.

Significant decisions

The City Council is elected to make very significant decisions on behalf of the community, including approving budgets for our \$85 million a year municipal corporation. Decisions by the Council, such as building new facilities, have the community's long-term interest in mind.

The Council carefully considered the following:

- ◆ Property tax cost of City services for an average home in Bloomington is \$37.71 per month. **Costs over the life cycle of our facilities make up less than 10 percent of the City's annual budget.**
- ◆ Building a police addition and remodeling the current City Hall would equal the costs of a new facility. This would also mean investing in a facility with a shorter life cycle and higher maintenance costs.
- ◆ The City Council has undertaken the investment in redevelopment of the triangle site at 98th and Old Shakopee Road just as Bloomington City Councils have historically authorized other redevelopment in the community.
- ◆ It is expected that the present Police/City Hall site at Penn and Old Shakopee will be sold to a private developer and the site will be brought back on the tax rolls, possibly as multiple housing for seniors.

Built from savings

A "pay as you go" strategy was developed to accumulate

reserves that pay for such future capital projects. This is key to the City's debt-reduction strategy. The benefits of building reserves this way include:

- ◆ Not having to issue debt and pay interest.
- ◆ Today's users pay today's costs.
- ◆ Stabilized taxes by spreading costs over the years. For example, cost is spread out each year a structure is used rather than just the years the City has outstanding debt.

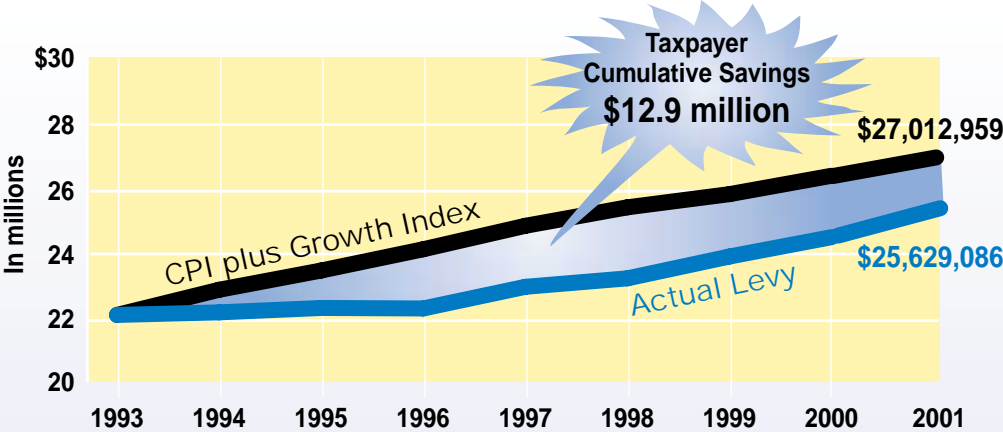
A good financial strategy

No additional taxes are needed to fund the capital facilities other than the Bloomington Center for the Arts, which was approved by referendum. Savings were accumulated over the past two decades and set aside for capital investments in City Hall and Public Works. By keeping the City levy well below the Consumer Price and community growth index, the City's taxpayers saved \$12.9 million since 1993. Tax levies below the inflation rate, plus growth, save taxpayers money. See graph below.

Work in progress

The City now owns all of the parcels on the campus site and is finalizing designs and the construction budget. Groundbreaking is expected later this spring for the Public Works addition and this summer for the Police/City Hall/Art Center facility. We continue to work hard to create quality buildings that the community will want to use and that will last. I am confident we're moving in the right direction to make City services more efficient and competitive for years to come.

Mayor Gene Winstead



Actual levy compared to CPI plus Growth Index through 2001

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) measures changes in prices of goods and services purchased for consumption by urban households. The Growth Index includes population increases and property development. Together they provide a gauge for determining cost containment during times of growth.

Financial efforts reap awards

Top bond rating

The bond rating agency, Standard & Poor's, assigned the City its highest rating - AAA. Only 37 cities nation-

wide have this rating. Standard & Poor's said the AAA reflects the "continued strength of the local economic base, which, along with management initiatives that include the extensive use of accumulated resources, will enable the city to reduce its debt burden."

Distinguished budget

For the fourth consecutive year, the City was awarded the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for its 1999 budget from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA).

2001 City property taxes One of lowest in metro area

The City Council's adoption of the 2001 General Fund Budget in December resulted in a tax levy of \$25,629,086, an increase of 4.8 percent over 2000. The increase is comprised of:

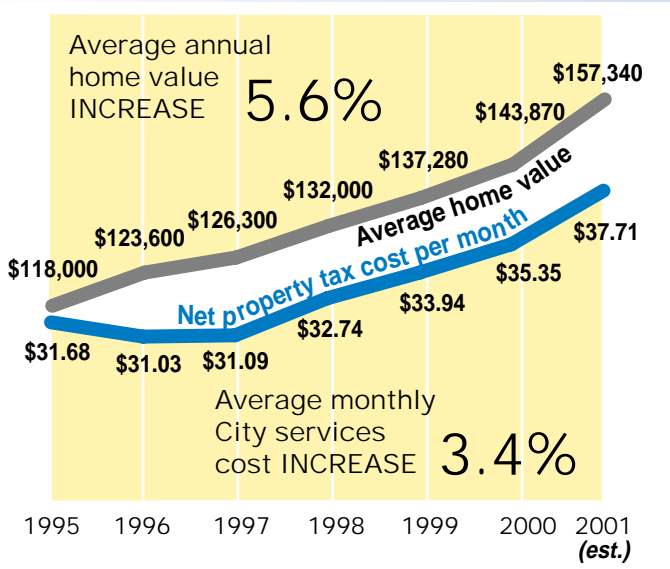
- ◆ 2.3 percent for the City's primary operations.
- ◆ 2.5 percent, or about \$600,000, for the Bloomington Center for the Arts which was approved by voters in a referendum last year.

Based on this tax levy, the City's portion of property taxes - 19 percent - will increase from \$35.35 to \$37.71 per month for the owner of an average-priced home in Bloomington with a 2001 market value of \$157,340.

"The strong economy, savings, improved productivity and long range planning have resulted in a strong financial position. Following increases of 2.9 percent in 1999 and 2.5 percent in 2000, the City's strong financial position has helped to keep tax increases low," explained Terri Heaton, Chief Financial Officer.

Home value and City services cost comparison

The City's levy is spread against property as the tax base. Since 1995, the average monthly cost for City services has increased 3.4 percent. During the same period, market values on the average Bloomington home, valued at \$157,340 in 2001, increased an average 5.6 percent per year. See graph below.



Responsible budgeting

School, County, City and other tax levies are combined with the Homestead Education Credit Aid, which is intended to offset tax base loss due to State legislation. Total City property taxes for the average Bloomington home increased, in total, \$2.36 per month. The Budget maintains property tax growth below combined community growth and inflation, keeps property tax support for the General Fund at about 50 percent and reinvests resources in the community.

When overall tax rates are ranked from highest to lowest, the approved 2001 levy will likely result in Bloomington retaining its tax rate position in the lowest third of 20 comparable metropolitan area cities with populations exceeding 15,000.

A closer look

Public works, police and fire services account for about 60 percent of the monthly services for which homeowners pay. See chart below.

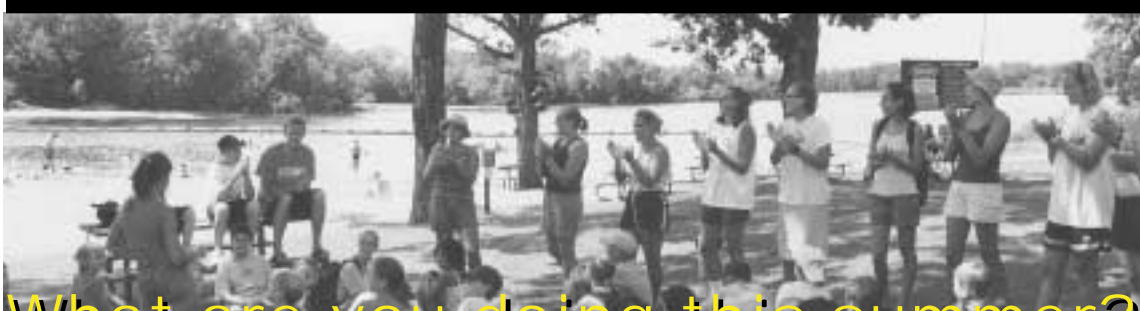
City services - Monthly property tax costs for average Bloomington home

Service Type	2000	2001
Police	\$10.48	\$11.24
Public Works	8.25	8.37
Community Services	5.06	6.17
Debt and Capital	2.52	3.09
Finance, Legal, Human Resources	2.45	2.45
Fire	2.18	2.33
Technical Services	2.09	1.67
Community Development	1.29	1.41
Administration	1.03	.98
TOTAL Monthly City Services	\$35.35	\$37.71
Average Home Value	\$143,870	\$157,340

Utility fees for water remain unchanged since 1995. Sewer and recycling fees will also stay the same this year. Storm water fees increased by \$.10 per month. Including utilities, the average home in our city will experience a \$2.46 per month total increase in City property taxes and fees for City services. ◆

PARKS, RECREATION & ARTS UPDATE

For more information, call Parks and Recreation at 952-563-8877.



What are you doing this summer?

Apply early for summer positions with the Parks and Recreation Division. There are a wide variety of part- and full-time openings available for day camp, playground, sports and water safety instructors as well as lifeguards and adaptive recreation aides. Call Parks and Recreation for an application and more information. ♦

Youth Activities

Spring Travel Club

The Travel Club meets at community events, facilities and businesses to explore leisure opportunities available in the area. Your children will develop social skills and relationships that last a lifetime. Travel Club is for youth of all abilities.

Staff/participant ratio: 1/6.

Limit: 20.

Who: Children, ages 7 - 12, of all ability levels.

When: Saturdays, March - May (7 sessions).

Time: Varied.

Cost: \$18 (resident); \$26 (non-resident). Fee covers transportation and supervision. Field trips are extra.

Register: Call Parks and Recreation. ♦

summer spectrum 2001

Super sign up for summer programs

When: Saturday, April 21.

Time: 9 - 11 a.m.

Where: Oak Grove Intermediate, 1300 W. 106th St.

Summer Spectrum, a cooperative effort between the Parks and Recreation Division, Bloomington Community Education and the Bloomington Art Center, provides summer activities for youth ranging from pottery to rock climbing, foreign language lessons to science camps. Reserve a spot for your child on this early registration day at Oak Grove Intermediate School. Regular registration begins Wednesday, April 25, at the Parks and Recreation and Kids' Safari offices. ♦

Adult Sports

Adult Tennis Drills

Taught by a certified tennis instructor, drills are practice sessions to improve stroke production. Facilities include locker rooms, showers, sauna, whirlpool, steam room, swimming pool, indoor running track and exercise room.

When: Session I: February 15 - March 22.
Session II: March 28 - May 2.

Times: Beginner Thursdays, 9 - 10 p.m.
Intermediate Wednesdays, 2 - 3 p.m.

Where: 98th Street Northwest Athletic Club.

Class size: 8 per class. Minimum 4 to hold class.

Cost: \$46.50/per session.

Daytime Volleyball

Exercise and enjoy volleyball during the mornings. All games are played at the Bloomington National Guard Training and Community Center. You don't need a team - one will be formed each time.

When: Tuesdays and Thursdays year-round.

Where: Bloomington National Guard Training and Community Center, 3300 W. 98th Street.

Time: 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Cost: \$1 per session.

Men's, Women's and Co-Rec Softball

When: One evening per week for 10 weeks starting April 30.

Where: Valley View and Dred Scott Playfields.

Cost: \$470 per team - Recreation.
\$630 per team - Open, Fast Pitch and Double Header.

Deadline: March 16.



Adaptive Recreation and Learning Exchange

The Adaptive Recreation and Learning Exchange (AR&LE) offers opportunities for people with disabilities to actively participate in recreational, leisure and community education programs in the cities of Bloomington, Eden Prairie, Edina and Richfield. Activities are available for varied ability levels in integrated or segregated settings. The City will make every reasonable effort to ensure residents can participate in the programs offered. For a complete listing of AR&LE's quarterly activities or to volunteer, call Parks and Recreation. ♦

Youth Sports

Bloomington Athletic Association

BAA offers baseball and softball programs for boys and girls age 5 through 12, including a mini-mite program for kids age 5. For information on programs, call the BAA Information Line at 952-888-0807 or visit their Web site at www.baaonline.org. ♦

Bloomington Youth Soccer Club

Recognized as one of the Twin Cities' best instructional soccer programs, Junior Kickers Summer Soccer is a 10-week introduction to the basics for children ages 5 through 12. From May to mid-July, there are weekly team practices with games late Sunday afternoons. Pick up registration materials at the Bloomington Loves Its Kids Carnival. For more information call our voicemail at 952-820-9444. ♦



17th Annual Shape Up Challenge

This friendly competition between Bloomington work-sites challenges employees to shape up! Worksite coordinators receive special training and all materials needed to participate in the contest, which runs from April

23 - June 3. Every week, employees record points for aerobic, strength-training and flexibility activities. Trophies are awarded to the companies with the most points per employee. Sponsored by Parks and Recreation, this is a great way to introduce fitness, team spirit and a little fun into your workplace. Call Parks and Recreation for more information or to sign up by April 9. ♦

Spring Egg Hunt

For children, ages 8 and under
Saturday, April 14
Starts at 11:30 a.m. - Arrive by 11 a.m.
West Bush Lake



They're out there somewhere. The challenge is finding them. Kids, fill your basket with eggs at this annual event sponsored by Parks and Recreation and the Bloomington Breakfast Optimist Club. ♦

Galaxy Youth Center Out of this world fun!

The sky's the limit for youth, grades 6 through 8, at Galaxy Youth Center, located at Bloomington Education Center, 8900 Portland Ave. S. The center provides opportunities to empower youth through recreation, leadership, socialization, learning and service activities. Buses are available from Olson Middle School. For more information, call 952-885-8548.

Hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday	2 - 6 p.m.
Friday	2 - 8 p.m.
Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday	Closed

You're invited
to a dance
Youth, grades 6, 7 and 8
Friday, March 16
7 - 10 p.m.
Galaxy Youth Center
8900 Portland Ave. S.



Carnival

**Saturday, February 24
12:30 - 3 p.m.
Northwestern Health
Sciences University,
84th and Penn Ave.**

Carnival games, exhibits, food, police and fire demonstrations, entertainment and fun for kids and families. **Free!** Please bring a food item for the VEAP food shelf. ♦

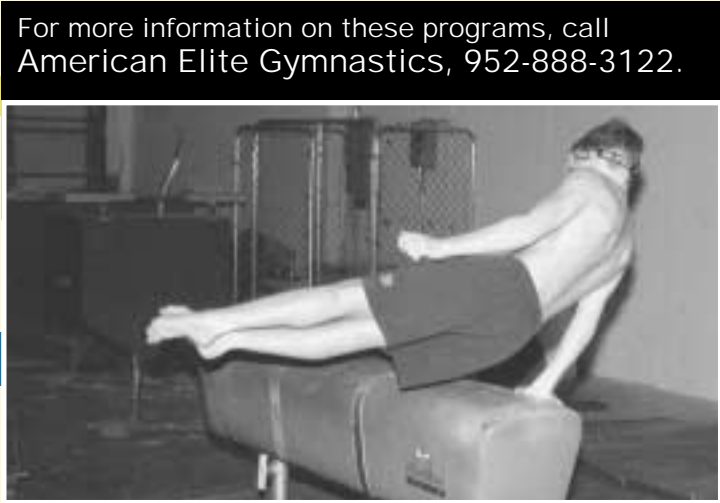
New
for 2001!

Gymnastics and Cheerleading Classes

To register, call Parks and Recreation at 952-563-8877.

Parks and Recreation is teaming up with American Elite Gymnastics to provide new programs for boys and girls including gymnastics, rhythmic gymnastics and cheerleading.

Where: American Elite Gymnastics, 6150 W. 110th Street



Gymnastics

Provide your tot with an introduction to an early gymnastics program. Classes will focus on cooperative learning, social interaction and exploration of movement. Children will improve coordination, balance, and flexibility and increase overall body strength. Gymnastics apparatus includes balance beam, uneven parallel bars, rings, pummel horse, parallel bars, vault, floor exercise and trampoline.

When: February 26 - April 7 (6 weeks).

Cost: \$35.

Limit: Eight per class; minimum of four to hold class.

- Tiny Tots**
Ages 18 months - 3 years.

This class exposes the young child to the fundamentals of gymnastics apparatus. Activities include warm-up exercises, beginning tumbling, introduction to the balance beam, vault, uneven parallel bars and trampoline. An adult must accompany all children.

Rollers
Ages 3 - 4. Child must be 3 by Feb. 1.

Activities include warm-up exercises, forward rolls and log rolls. Children are introduced to cartwheels, beginning skills on uneven bars, balance beam and vaulting.
- Wheelers**
Ages 5-7.

Classes focus on mastering new skills on all gymnastics apparatus. Activities include warm-up exercises and tumbling skills including cartwheels. Beginning mounts and dismounts, uneven bars, balance beam and vaulting are taught. Children are encouraged to practice skills at home to help increase strength and flexibility.

Twisters
Ages 6 and up.

Children should have previous gymnastics experience. This class will focus on mastering skills on all phases of gymnastics apparatus. Activities include warm-up exercises, splits, bridges and tumbling. Children combine the skills learned to develop beginning routines. Students are encouraged to practice at home to help increase flexi-

	M	TU	W	TH	F	SA
9 - 9:40 a.m.	Tiny Tots	Rollers	Tiny Tots	Rollers	-	Tiny Tots
9:45 - 10:25 a.m.	Wheelers	Tiny Tots	Wheelers	Tiny Tots	-	Twisters
10:30 - 11:10 a.m.	Tiny Tots	Twisters	Rollers	Wheelers	-	Wheelers
11:15 - 11:55 a.m.	Rollers	-	Tiny Tots	-	-	Twisters
12 - 12:40 p.m.	-	-	-	-	-	Rollers
12:45 - 1:25 p.m.	-	-	-	-	-	Wheelers
1 - 1:40 p.m.	-	-	Tiny Tots	Twisters	Tiny Tots	Tiny Tots
1:30 - 2:10 p.m.	-	-	-	-	-	Twisters
1:45 - 2:15 p.m.	-	-	-	-	Rollers	Rollers
2:15 - 2:55 p.m.	-	-	-	-	-	Tiny Tots
2:30 - 3:10 p.m.	-	-	-	-	Wheelers	-
3:15 - 3:55 p.m.	-	-	Twisters	-	Twisters	-
6 - 6:40 p.m.	Tiny Tots	Wheelers	-	Rollers	-	-
6:45 - 7:25 p.m.	Twisters	Rollers	-	Wheelers	-	-



Rhythmic Gymnastics/Cheerleading

When: March 5 - 31 (4 weeks).

Cost: \$35.

Limit: Eight per class; minimum of four to hold class.

Rhythmic Gymnastics

Learn the techniques of this exciting Olympic sport that combines strength, flexibility, dance and gymnastics. Set to music, routines incorporate ribbons, balls, hoops and clubs into the exercise.

Rhythmic I: Ages 5 - 8.

Rhythmic II: Ages 9 and up.

Cheerleading

From toe touching to tumbling and motions to mounts, CHEER classes cover the basics of cheerleading at every level and all age groups. Whether beginning, intermediate or advanced, CHEER classes offer a well-balanced curriculum of techniques for cheerleaders.

Cheer I: Ages 5-10.

Cheer II: Ages 11 and up.

Cheer III: Ages 11 and up. Cheer and tumbling experience required.

	M	TU	W	TH	F	SA
10 - 10:45 a.m.	-	Rhythmic I	-	-	-	-
11 a.m. - 12 noon	-	-	-	-	-	Cheer I
11 - 11:45 a.m.	-	Rhythmic I	-	-	-	-
12 noon - 1 p.m.	-	-	-	-	-	Cheer II
5 - 6 p.m.	Cheer I	-	Cheer I	-	Rhythmic II	-
6 - 7 p.m.	Cheer II	Cheer II	-	Cheer I	Rhythmic II	-
7 - 8 p.m.	Cheer II	Cheer III	-	Cheer II	Rhythmic II	-

Hennepin Parks

Hyland Lake Park Reserve

Hyland Lake Visitor Center 952-941-4362
Hyland Ski and Snowboard Area 952-835-4250
Cross-Country Ski Trail Hotline 763-559-6778

- The snow will go and spring will bring outdoor recreation at Hyland Lake Park Reserve. This 1,000-acre recreational area offers activities for visitors of all ages and abilities. Equipment rental and lessons are available at reasonable rates.
- Spring highlights:**
- ◆ HSSA Chalet Drive Golf Practice Center with 40 driving stations and restaurant.
 - ◆ Trails - 5.6-mile paved hiking and biking, 7.3 miles for turf hiking and 2.5 miles for pet walking.
 - ◆ Picnicking, fishing and boating areas.
 - ◆ Visitor center with concessions and rental equipment.
 - ◆ Richardson Nature Center with programs, displays and rental equipment.

Richardson Nature Center

Richardson Nature Center 952-941-7993

We're remodeling, but will be offering a limited number of programs at Hyland Visitor Center. For more information or to register, call Richardson Nature Center. Reservations are usually made one week in advance.

- Spring Bird ID Class: Waterfowl**
Tuesday, March 13, 7 p.m.
Learn from area birding experts how to identify waterfowl including ducks, geese and swans. Bring notepad, pencil and bird book. Ages 12 and up. Patrons \$3; regular rate \$6.
- Spring Bird ID Class: Blackbirds and Sparrows**
Tuesday, March 20, 7 p.m.
Some of the hardest species to identify are blackbirds and sparrows. Learn more about these birds through the use of slides, taped calls and birding experts. Ages 12 and up.

White Sale

March 1 through closing day.

Enjoy two-for-one lift tickets at Hyland Ski and Snowboard Area.

Protect our natural resources

How you buy, use and dispose of products has a significant impact on the environment. Make an effort to recycle products you use everyday, especially those that may contain toxic materials. Reduce your energy consumption and not only protect the environment, but save money. Enhance water quality with proper lawn and garden care to keep pollutants from reaching our lakes and streams. The simple steps we take will protect the earth's natural resources and our health.

Recycling computers

Since 1999, more than 20 million computers have become obsolete, creating a challenge for safe disposal. Though not a risk when used by consumers, these products become health and environmental hazards when they are stored, landfilled or incinerated because they contain toxins.

Risks

- ◆ Significant amounts of **lead** can be found in monitors.
- ◆ Hazardous metals such as **lead, chromium, cadmium and mercury** are present in printed circuit boards of PCs.
- ◆ Batteries, switches and relays in electronic products contain **mercury**.

◆ **PCB**, an environmental pollutant and carcinogen, may be found in televisions and computers made before the early 1980s.

Where to recycle

Do not throw these products in the trash. Recycle them instead. The following facilities salvage reusable parts from unwanted PCs and electronics.

- ◆ South Hennepin Recycling and Problem Waste Facility, 1400 W. 96th St., Bloomington, 612-348-6500. *There is no drop-off charge for residents.*
- ◆ Asset Recovery Corporation, St. Paul, 651-602-0789.
- ◆ Electronic Recovery, Minneapolis, 612-338-2466. *Call*

for residential/commercial acceptance and fees.

- ◆ Materials Processing Corporation, Eagan, 651-681-8099.
- ◆ Superior Special Services, Bloomington, 952-948-0626.
- ◆ Waste Management-Asset Recovery Group, Inver Grove Heights, 651-



Facts surrounding watersheds

Water bodies have watersheds: the surrounding land that drains into a lake, stream or river. This includes natural and artificial drainage systems, such as ditches and storm sewers. If we pollute a watershed, we directly affect the water quality in that lake, stream or river.

Storm water runoff

In a natural watershed, much of the rain soaks into the soil of grassy or vegetated areas. However, in an urban watershed, rain runs off hard surfaces such as streets, driveways and rooftops.

As rainwater flows from street to storm sewer, it picks up pollutants including oil, antifreeze, leaves, grass clippings, pet wastes and chemicals from lawns and gardens. Storm sewers provide direct routes for pollutants to lakes and streams.

Lawn care

Phosphorus, one of the most troublesome pollutants, is in leaves, lawn clippings, animal wastes and most lawn fertilizers. When phosphorus reaches a lake or stream it increases algae growth which then blocks sunlight and prevents other plants from growing. As algae decays, it also takes oxygen from fish.

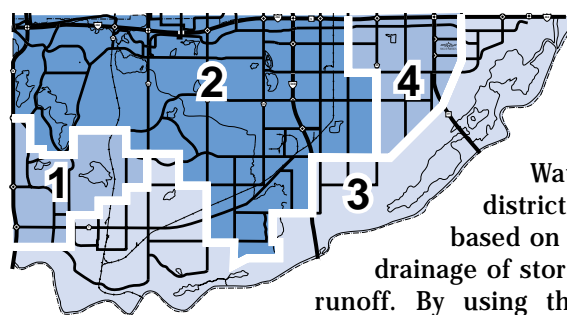
Protecting watersheds

We are all part of the solution to water quality problems. Our actions affect the water and environment around us. Start by keeping a healthy lawn. Plant and maintain grass and natural

vegetation to help soak up rainfall, reduce runoff and retain sediment. Use phosphorus-free fertilizers. Keep leaves and lawn clippings

out of the streets and gutters. Pick up pet waste. This all adds up to quality water that is safe to swim in, live by and enjoy. ◆

Watershed districts



Watershed districts are based on surface drainage of stormwater runoff. By using the best

management practices on your lot, you contribute to the overall water quality of your watershed. This is important because all water in these boundaries eventually flows to the Minnesota River.

If you are doing significant construction that requires a permit, want water quality information or are interested in volunteer opportunities, call the contact number in your district:

- 1 Riley-Purgatory Creek**
Barr Engineering - 952-832-2600
- 2 Nine Mile Creek**
Barr Engineering - 952-832-2600
- 3 Lower Minnesota**
Administrator - 952-496-8842
- 4 Bloomington/Richfield**
Bloomington Engineering - 952-563-4867

Reduce energy use

Adhere to this year's resolution and get rid of those unwanted pounds. That is, pounds of harmful emissions released into the atmosphere each year. Reducing energy consumption lowers emissions of greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, that contribute to global warming.

Cut greenhouse gas emissions by more than 10,000 pounds a year !

Reduce, reuse, recycle

850 pounds

Save energy required to manufacture new containers. Buy products that have reusable, recyclable or reduced packaging. At home, recycle newspapers, magazines, junk mail, cardboard, glass and plastic bottles and metal cans.

Buy a fuel-efficient car

5,600 pounds

When buying a car, look for one that gets more than 30 miles per gallon. Keep your car tuned up and properly inflate tires to further save on fuel costs.

Consider alternative transportation

1,590 pounds

Take a bus, carpool or bicycle at least two days a week.

Keep your home energy efficient

2,480 pounds

Insulate, caulk windows and doors, tune up your furnace and air conditioner.

Harness energy from the sun

720 pounds

Install a solar thermal system in your home that will help provide hot water.

Plant trees

50 pounds

Trees reduce energy when planted for shade and they absorb carbon dioxide from the air. ◆

Information taken from the Environmental Protection Agency.

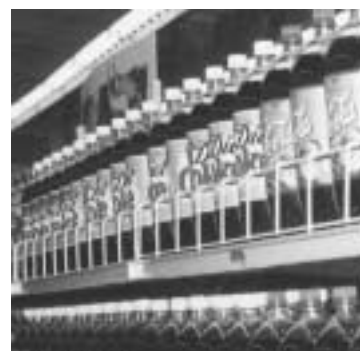
Did you know?

◆ **Nearly 17 million trees are used for the 1 million tons of disposable paper plates and cups Americans throw away each year.**

◆ **Using a gas-powered lawn mower for 1 hour creates as much air pollution as driving a car 50 miles.**

◆ **In an average-sized home, the combined areas of small cracks, crevices and holes would equal the cold air let in by a medium-sized open window.**

Information taken from the Saint Paul Neighboring Energy Consortium.



What natural resource is used to make a plastic bottle?

Answer: Petroleum

This article is an authorized adapted reprint from "Watersheds, Lawn Care and Water Quality," produced by the Lake Harriet Watershed Awareness Project.

Bloomington Yesterday

Plowing snow in the early 1900s

Major horsepower

This is how our streets were cleared in Bloomington's early years. Horses were hitched up to a plow to pull it through the snow. So many horses were used in this example that the photographer couldn't fit the plow into the picture.



Bloomington Historical Society

Catch our drift?

Snow emergency parking ban

When three or more inches of snow are on the ground, a snow emergency is automatically in effect. Plowing begins early to clear heavily-used streets by rush hour. No parking is allowed on any city street for the next 48 hours or until it has been plowed curb-to-curb.

For information, call the **Snow Emergency Hotline at 952-563-8768.**

Our Future – Our Youth

Board sets direction of BUY

The journey continues in a positive direction for Bloomington United for Youth (BUY) with a newly developed board. After three and a half years of significant work, the BUY Management Team is recruiting community leaders to further integrate asset-building into the fabric of our community. The 14-member board consists of leaders representing students, parents, businesses, civic groups, media, schools, faith communities, youth-serving organizations and the City of Bloomington.

In November, the Board completed a strategic planning session led by a consultant from the Minnesota Institute of Cultural Affairs. In addition to setting a future direction for BUY, the group developed a

vision and identified strengths and weaknesses. Proposed actions include:

- ◆ **Facilitate asset-building activities** such as valuing family time, leadership retreats, intergenerational dialogues, asset-building zones in our community, adopt-a-grand-parent/youth and cultural fairs.

- ◆ **Create community awareness** about asset-building through advertising, outreach and communication.

- ◆ **Expand BUY's function** to include fundraising, staffing, youth involvement, networking and partnerships.



The Board will also be addressing the substantial one-year accomplishments required to launch these new strategic directions.

The Bloomington United for Youth Board invites other community members to get involved with asset-building activities throughout the year. For more information, contact Dick Ramberg at 952-921-1945 or Pat Brookman at 952-886-8802. ◆

Retreat identifies youth as leaders



“It was a great experience. I really learned a lot about leadership and myself.”

Senior at Jefferson High School

In November, students from Jefferson and Kennedy High Schools attended a youth leadership retreat at YMCA Camp Icaghowan in Amery, Wisconsin. The City's Human Services and Public Health Divisions, Galaxy Youth Center and Bloomington United for Youth sponsored the retreat.

A learning experience

The event brought 26 students, grades 9 – 12, together

to work toward a common vision of youth leadership by developing a greater self-awareness and world view, demonstrating citizenship skills, showing how youth can make a difference and identifying youth involvement opportunities.

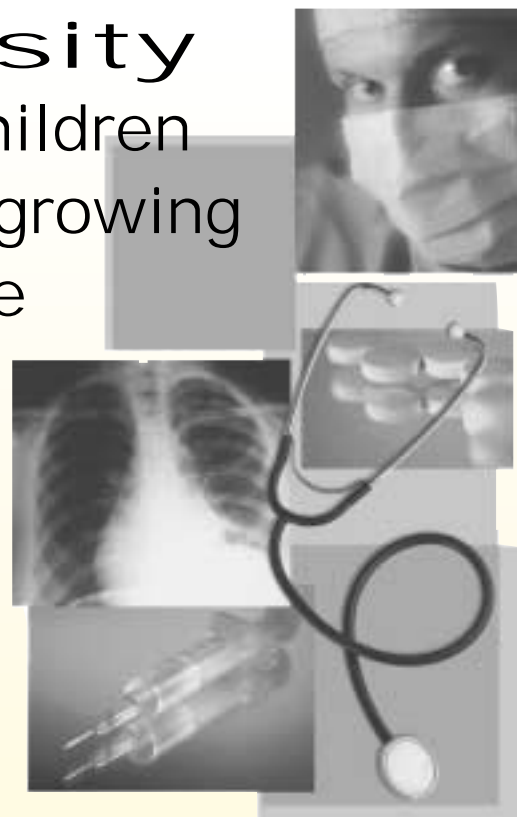
Taking on leadership roles

In an agreement to serve as moral and ethical leaders in our community, the youth included six essential characteristics: **courage, dedication, honesty, passion, patience and respect.** The youth will meet in February and April for additional leadership training and will participate in service learning projects within our community.

For more information or to get involved, call the Galaxy Youth Center at 952-885-8548. ◆

Obesity in children is a growing issue

Overweight youth are at risk of developing serious health conditions.



The percentage of overweight youth, ages 6 – 17, has tripled since the 1960s. Insufficient physical activity and unhealthy diets are two of the main contributors to youth obesity.

Health risks

Overweight youth have a greater risk of developing a variety of serious, often life-threatening, conditions such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, arthritis and cancer. Type 2 diabetes, which usually develops in adults over age 40 and is directly related to obesity, has skyrocketed among children.

Understanding barriers

Some of the barriers to good nutrition and physical activity for youth include:

- ◆ *Excessive television viewing.*
- ◆ *Popularity of take-out food* which has bigger portions and more calories than meals prepared at home.
- ◆ *Lack of after-school programs* for adolescents.
- ◆ *Fear of crime and lack of sidewalks and bike paths* which has reduced the number of children who walk to school or other activities.
- ◆ *Availability of high fat, high sugar foods* from vending machines and stores and their use as a reward.
- ◆ *Highly competitive sports* that start at a young age and exclude all but the best athletes.

Working together for healthy youth

It will take a concerted effort from many sectors of the community to change the eating habits and activity levels in children. A branch of the Tri-City Partners for Healthy Youth and Communities is working on environmental policies that will positively affect the health of our youth. For more information, contact Joan Bulfer, Bloomington Health Division, at 952-563-8992 or email jbulfer@ci.bloomington.mn.us. ◆

Don't know where to turn?

FamLink gives you direction

The FamLink Resource Center is your way to get connected to valuable community resources, services or programs relating to: **basic needs, family services, youth programs, senior support and immigrant services.**

FamLink is a collaborative effort focused on improving the way human services needs are met. The network of partners includes schools, businesses, faith organizations, civic groups, City and human services providers.

The FamLink Resource Center is located at Creekside Community Center, 9801 Penn Avenue South. Staff are available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and one night a week until 7 p.m. For information, call 952-884-0444 V/TTY. ♦

On-line additions

Visit the City's Web site lately? Here's a listing of new information you will find at www.ci.bloomington.mn.us.



- ◆ **City's cable television** - franchise agreement with Time Warner, answers to frequently asked questions and on-line complaint form.
- ◆ **Standard construction details** for public improvement projects and private development.
- ◆ **Norman Pointe Development Project** final Environmental Impact Statement. Located at Green Valley and Norman Center Drives, the project replaces two buildings with two 9-story office buildings, a 14-story office building and a hotel.

- ◆ **Smoking cessation and education** programs in southern Hennepin County.
- ◆ **Off-leash recreation area for dogs** - site rules and tips for visitors. The 25-acre site is located on 111th St. between Nesbitt and Hampshire Ave.
- ◆ **Home Improvement Resource Guide** - tips on hiring contractors, getting bids, common remodeling projects and sample diagrams.
- ◆ **New City facilities** updates including **Water Treatment Plant expansion** details.
- ◆ **Annual Report of the Utilities Division.**

To easily locate a specific topic, use the search feature entitled, "I'm looking for" on our home page. Type in the key words, above in bold, and click "search". ♦

Free tax assistance

Free income tax advice and assistance is available for older adults, low and moderate-income families and for persons with disabilities at Creekside Community Center, 9801 Penn Avenue South. Tax preparation is available by:

- ◆ **Walk-in** - First-come, first-served basis from 6 - 9 p.m., Thursday evenings, February 15, March 15 and April 12.
- ◆ **Appointment** - Mondays and Wednesdays, February 5 - April 16, from 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

What to bring

- ◆ 2000 tax form booklets.
- ◆ A copy of your 1999 federal and state income tax returns.
- ◆ All documents concerning your 2000 income: adjustments, deductions, credits, payments.
- ◆ If filing for a property tax refund, a copy of your 1999 property tax refund claim and 2001 property tax statement or certificate of rent paid.

Trained AARP volunteers and accountants provide tax assistance, cosponsored by Bloomington Human Services and FamLink. To make an appointment, call 952-563-4957 V/TTY. ♦

Life is Like a Valued Patchwork

The Senior Program at Creekside dishes up its monthly continental breakfast series:

- February 28** - *Taste and See: Nutrition Practices for Seniors* - The latest nutrition recommendations for older adults.
- March 28** - *Memory Magic* - How to improve your memory.
- April 25** - *Vintage Humor* - Author Donna Lagoria Montgomery, described as the Twin Cities' Erma Bombeck, will speak.

Cost is \$3, payable at the door. To register, call the Senior Program at 952-563-4957 V/TTY. For transportation, call 952-563-4948. ♦

Bush Lake shoreline restoration

With no natural outlet, the water level at Bush Lake has risen over time. In order to maintain a normal water level, a pipe and lift station were installed to pump excess water to nearby Anderson Lake.

Construction and repair to water quality basins that were damaged by the extended high water levels have been completed. The project's second phase includes removing 100 dead trees this winter and restoring the exposed shoreline. The removal of trees that pose a safety risk is allowed by the Department of Natural Resources.

Native plants will emerge

Many seeds of native lakeshore plants already exist in the exposed mudflats and will begin to grow this spring. First, weedy plants like smartweed and tickseed will emerge to provide groundcover. Then, sturdy perennial wildflowers, grasses and ferns will appear. By summer, dense vegetation will cover the newly exposed shoreline.



Ridding shoreline of invasive plants

Also buried in the mudflats are invasive weeds such as purple loosestrife and reed canary grass. These aggressive non-native plants can quickly replace the native vegetation that provides an excellent habitat for wildlife. To prevent the growth of these plants, the shoreline will be hand-weeded and sprayed with herbicide from April through October over a four-year time period. The efforts from homeowners and the City will continue to protect the shores from invasive species encroachment.

For more information, call the Engineering Division at 952-563-4867. ♦

Clean Water Festival on Saturday, April 21, 2001

Learn more about water quality with games, entertainment and activities for the whole family! Attend the Clean Water Festival on Saturday, April 21, 2001, at Olson Middle School, 4551 West 102nd Street, from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

For information, call Christina Peterson at 952-563-4870. ♦



Citywide Garage Sale to be held this spring

2001 Citywide Garage Sale

West of 35W	Thursday, Friday, Saturday, May 3, 4, 5
East of 35W	Thursday, Friday, Saturday, May 10, 11, 12

2001 Citywide Curbside Cleanup

Regular Trash Collection is	In the Area from	Cleanup Day is Saturday,
Friday	West of Normandale	April 21
Thursday	France to Normandale	April 28
Wednesday	Penn to France	May 5
Tuesday	Portland to Penn	May 19
Monday	East of Portland	June 9

Be constructive with a home improvement loan

The Bloomington Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) is now accepting applications for its Home Improvement Deferred Loan Program.

Loans of up to \$25,000 are available to Bloomington homeowners. There are no monthly payments. Repayment occurs when the home is sold, transferred or conveyed. Interest is charged at a simple 5 percent per year for the first 10 years based on the original loan amount.

Since 1975, the HRA has loaned more than \$5 million to homeowners to maintain the condition of housing and neighborhoods in the city and to aid in renewing our community.

Eligible repairs

- ◆ Replacement of roofs, electrical and plumbing systems.
- ◆ New furnaces, gutters, windows, doors, insulation, siding, soffits and fascia.
- ◆ Exterior painting.
- ◆ Foundation, sidewalk or step repairs.

Ineligible repairs

- ◆ Decorating.
- ◆ Additions.
- ◆ Finishing of basements.
- ◆ Remodeling.

Application guidelines

To apply for a Home Improvement Deferred Loan, you must have sufficient equity in your home to cover the amount of the loan. Income guidelines apply. See *graph*.

Persons in household	Maximum gross income
1	\$35,150
2	\$40,150
3	\$45,200
4	\$50,200
5	\$54,200
6	\$58,250
7	\$62,250
8 or more	\$66,250

Deadline

Loan applications will be accepted at the HRA office in City Hall, 2215 West Old Shakopee Road, until March 9. For more information or to receive an application, call 952-563-8937. ♦